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Subject: California Acts to Prohibit Chlorpyrifos Pesticide | CalEPA

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California Acts to Prohibit Chlorpyrifos Pesticide

Move to ban follows scientific findings that chlorpyrifos poses serious public health and environmental risks to vulnerable communities

Governor's May Revision proposes \$5.7 million in new funding to support the transition to safer, more sustainable alternatives

CDFR and DPR will convene a new working group to identify, evaluate and recommend alternative pest management solutions

SACRAMENTO – In a move to protect workers, public health and the environment, the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) announced today that the

Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) is acting to ban the use of the pesticide and toxic air contaminant chlorpyrifos in California by initiating cancellation of the pesticide.

CalEPA and the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) also announced that the Governor will propose \$5.7 million in new funding in the May Revision budget proposal to support the transition to safer, more sustainable alternatives, and plans to convene a working group to identify, evaluate and recommend alternative pest management solutions.

“California’s action to cancel the registration of chlorpyrifos is needed to prevent the significant harm this pesticide causes children, farm workers and vulnerable communities,” said CalEPA Secretary Jared Blumenfeld. “This action also represents a historic opportunity for California to develop a new framework for alternative pest management practices.”

The decision to ban chlorpyrifos follows mounting evidence, including recent findings by the state’s independent Scientific Review Panel on Toxic Air Contaminants, that the pesticide causes serious health effects in children and other sensitive populations at lower levels of exposure than previously understood. These effects include impaired brain and neurological development.

In April, chlorpyrifos was formally listed as a “toxic air contaminant”, which California law defines as “an air pollutant which may cause or contribute to an increase in mortality or an increase in serious illness, or which may pose a present or potential hazard to human health.” The listing requires DPR to develop control measures to protect the health of farm workers and others living and working near where the pesticide is used.

DPR has determined, in consultation with CDFA, the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA), and the California Air Resources Board (CARB), that sufficient additional control measures are not feasible.

As a result, DPR intends to move forward in a responsible manner by beginning the process of canceling the registrations for products containing chlorpyrifos, and at the same time, convening a cross-sector working group to identify safer alternatives to avoid replacing chlorpyrifos with an equally harmful pesticide.

DPR also will consult with county agricultural commissioners and local air pollution control districts before filing for cancellation. The cancellation process could take up to two years.

During the cancellation process, DPR’s recommendations to county agricultural commissioners for tighter permit restrictions on the use of chlorpyrifos will remain in place. These include a ban on aerial spraying, quarter-mile buffer zones and limiting use to crop-

pest combinations that lack alternatives. DPR will support aggressive enforcement of these restrictions.

DPR and CDFA will convene a cross-sector working group to identify and develop safer and more practical and sustainable alternatives to chlorpyrifos, including the use of biological controls and other integrated pest management practices. They will also partner with growers as they transition from using chlorpyrifos to implement safer alternatives.

In addition, the Governor's May Revision budget proposal includes \$5.7 million in funding for additional research and technical assistance to support this effort. In combination, the working group and funding for alternatives will produce short-term solutions and prioritize the development of long-term solutions to support healthy communities and a thriving agricultural sector.

"We look forward to working with the Legislature through the budget process on the Governor's proposal to support growers in the transition to alternative pest management," said CDFA Secretary Karen Ross.

In 2015, DPR designated chlorpyrifos as a "restricted material" that requires a permit from the county agricultural commissioner for its application. In addition, application of chlorpyrifos must be recommended by a licensed pest control advisor and supervised by a licensed certified applicator.

The proposed cancellation would apply to dozens of agricultural products containing the pesticide. The pesticide has been prohibited by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for residential uses since 2001.

Chlorpyrifos is used to control pests on a variety of crops, including alfalfa, almonds, citrus, cotton, grapes and walnuts. It has declined in use over the past decade as California growers have shifted to safer alternatives. Use of the pesticide dropped more than 50 percent from two million pounds in 2005 to just over 900,000 pounds in 2016.